

*Done* THE *Jane Mitchell*  
C A S E 7  
O F

**Tyth-Free Estates**

*WAL:* EXAMIN'D, *Mitchell*

According to

PRINCIPLES OF CONSCIENCE:  
OR, SOME  
CONSIDERATIONS

Humbly Offered to the

Owners of such Estates,

And to Others whom it may Concern;

WITH RELATION TO

*Her Majesty's Royal Bounty*

TO THE

POOR CLERGY

OF THE

**Church of England.**

*And they shall not appear before the Lord empty.*

*Deut. 16. 16.*

*I will not offer unto the Lord my God, of that  
which doth cost me nothing. 2 Sam. 24. 24.*

By a Minister of the Church of ENGLAND,  
and of the Diocess of EXON.

EXON: Printed by Sam. Farley, for Phil. Yeo, Book-  
seller, over-against St. Martin's-Lane, 1714.

P

THIS

the

Services

ter Way

ports of

meanly

think, j

kind Ce

cast upo

tle's Q

Am

Truth

IT

hinks,

is p

which t

Zeal fo

And a

esty's

ure A

many C

nable

Gal.

---

---

# T H E P R E F A C E.

**T**HIS Discourse was drawn up with a Design to serve the poor Clergy, who have but too much need of such Services; which I heartily wish were done them in a better Way. If the Argument hath in it the needful Supports of Truth and Reason, (as I hope it hath, how meanly soever it may be here manag'd) this, one would think, should be sufficient to shelter it from the unkind Censures, that ill-minded Men may be tempted to cast upon it: But if it should not, I shall take the Apostle's Question to be a sufficient Answer to all such Men; Am I become your Enemy, because I tell you the Truth?

IT is some Satisfaction to the Author, and, methinks, should be no Detriment to the Discourse, that he is pleading that Cause at the Bar of Conscience, which the Queen of Great-Britain hath shewn so much Zeal for, by Her late Royal Bounty to the Poor Clergy. And as it will be a standing Monument of Her Majesty's Piety, that will render Her Name glorious in future Ages, that She hath procured the Building of so many Churches in Her Great Metropolis; so it is reasonable to believe, it would be no small Satisfaction to Her,

A

20

*to see those many Churches throughout England better fill'd, which now stand almost empty for want of a competent Maintenance for fit Persons to attend the constant Weekly Service there. And as Her Majesty's Royal Zeal for Religion, in Beautifying and Adorning Her Ancient Cathedral at Westminster, hath been imitated by some in the like way; so it is humbly hop'd, that Her Royal Bounty to the Poor Clergy, will have its proper and sovereign Influences in provoking others to imitate Her Royal Zeal for God's Holy Worship and Service in that Way: For tho' Altar-Pieces, and such like comely Ornaments in Churches, have their respective Uses, and are the proper Testimonies of a pious and devout Mind in the Benefactor; yet they cannot speak to God, nor of God, in that instructive way that the Ministry doth.*

*AS to what may be justly objected against this Discourse, with relation to the manifold Defects in its Composition and Method, I have only this to say by way of a becoming Acknowledgment, that it is a very imperfect Essay upon a Subject which may deserve a more complete Management from better Hands; and which may not be unfit to entertain the serious Thoughts of any one who has a due Regard for the Worship of God, and the publick Profession of Religion, and for the Reputation and Welfare of the Church of England. For the Case I have here consider'd, with relation to the Poor Clergy, is deplorable enough; and if proper Remedies were apply'd, I cannot but hope it might be effectual, not only to revive that due and laudable Zeal for the Worship of God and the publick Profession of Religion, which is in a manner dead in too many places; but also to suppress or at least weaken the growing Power of Schism.*

*THERE is at length obtain'd, by the Blessing of Almighty God, upon the wise and watchful Conduct*

## The Preface.

v

Her Majesty and Her Ministry, a Blessed and Glorious Peace, whereby the Burthen of Taxes is become already much lighter. And, as this Consideration may help to render the present Discourse somewhat more seasonable; so, whatever shall be done in the Way, and to accomplish the good Ends, herein propos'd, may, perhaps, be no unacceptable Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to that God, who is the Author of Peace and Lover of Concord; and who, though he dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands; yet, whilst he dwelt here on Earth in our \* Flesh, was daily teaching and preaching in the Temple, in the Way of a publick Ministry, for the Salvation of Men.

---

\* Matth. 26. 55.

---

T H E

THE

TY

I Do not  
Cont  
will there  
present I  
rs of T  
upports  
service, r  
d upon a  
exemption  
ey have  
discha  
Now i  
ident  
cure M  
at Po  
wer be  
aching  
man A  
by th  
ficient  
e Suppo  
e, wh

---

T H E  
C A S E  
O F  
T Y T H - F R E E E S T A T E S  
E X A M I N ' D , &c.

I Do not intend in this *Discourse*, to meddle with the Controversy about the *Divine Right of Tythes*; neither will there be any Occasion for it, in the Prosecution of my present Design: Which is only to shew, That the Owners of Tyth-free Estates are oblig'd to contribute to the support and Maintenance of that Gospel Ministry, and service, which they partake of: That this Obligation is grounded upon a Law superior to all Humane Laws, Ordinances, or exemptions whatever: So that those legal Exemptions which they have to plead, for the Non-payment of Tythes, does not at all discharge 'em from the Obligations of that Superiour Law.

Now in order to this, I think I may lay it down as an evident Truth, that Legal Exemptions, cannot, in any Case, secure Men from Guilt or Blame, beyond the Extent of that Power which grants those Exemptions. For that Power being meerly human, the Exemption is capable of reaching no farther than the Nature or Extent of such an human Law or Power. I mean, that Men's being exempted by the Laws of the Land from paying Tythes, can't be sufficient to justify their not contributing (if they are able) to the Support and Maintenance of a Gospel Ministry, and Service, which they partake of; if it shall appear, that they are

are oblig'd to such a Contribution by a Law *Superior* to all human Laws ; that is by a *Divine Law* still in force.

F O R, tho' they are Exempted from the Obligation of all human Laws, thus to contribute, yet this can't be sufficient to acquit or secure the *Conscience*, with relation to Divine Laws : So that if there is a Divine Law still in force, which enjoyns 'em to contribute, &c. then I conceive no human Power, tho' never so absolute or despotick, can be sufficient to Exempt or Acquit 'em from the Obligation in point of *Conscience*. Because no human Law seems to be sufficient to take off more Obligation than it hath Power to lay on ; nor consequently to Release or Exempt the *Conscience* from an Obligation arising from a *Divine Law*.

I beg leave to set forth what I mean in this Discourse, in the Words of a very Learned Prelate of our Church, in his Book called *Irenicum* \*. Where speaking of the Maintenance of a Gospel Ministry, he expresseth himself thus. I say, saith he, *these things are clear in themselves, and I think sufficient grounds for Conscience, as to the duty of paying on the one side, and the Lawfulness of Receiving on the other. First, that a Maintenance in general be given to Gospel Ministers, is of Divine Right ; else the Labourer was not worthy of his hire, nor could that be true, which St. Paul saith, that our Lord hath Ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.* And then, having asserted a Maintenance to be due in general by a *Divine Law or Right* ; he next asserts the Lawfulness of the Magistrates Authority, in determining the particular way of raising it, 'and then derives the Equity of Tythes from what was the most Ancient Practice of the World, in Dedicating Things to God, and what was approved by God himself among his own People.

AND then he tells us, ' What is thus determined by the lawful Authority of the Magistrate, doth bind the Consciences of all that are subject to that Power, to Obedience to it for *Conscience* sake : So that from what this Author observes, the Obligation upon *Conscience*, to a Maintenance in general, seems plainly to arise from Divine Law or Right : And even the particular way

\* *Stillingfleet's Irenicum*, Part II. Chap 6. pag. 342, 343.

raising it, to be grounded upon a *Divine Law* too, if the *common Equity* and *Reasonableness* of things may be counted such. And the Obligation upon Conscience, arising from the Lawfulness of the Magistrate's Power to determine as to the way, he doth not seem to derive immediately from the Magistrate's enacting some particular Law in that Case, but from the Authority of that *Divine Law*, which commands Obedience to the Magistrate: Because he tells us, *That the Magistrate's Determination in this Case, binds the Conscience to Obedience, for Conscience Sake.* I suppose, he means for Conscience towards God: For where the Apostle tells us, we must needs be subject to the Magistrate, not only for Wrath, or Fear of his Displeasure, but for Conscience sake; he means, I suppose, for Conscience toward God, whose Laws alone I take to be the Supream Rule of Conscience.

And therefore, I can't understand how this Obligation upon Men's Consciences can cease, tho' the Magistrate exempt them from Payment of Tyths (the Obligation arising, not from the Magistrate's, but God's Authority) any more than a Man can be acquitted in Conscience from contributing to the Poor out of a plentiful Estate, purely because the Magistrate may think fit, by a particular Indulgence, to exempt his Estate from paying to the Poor Rates, as the Law in that Case directs.

An *Exemption* from the Law of the Magistrate, may be suppos'd in both these Cases; but I can't see how an *Exemption* from the Law of God, can follow in either. And this is only what I assert, that an *Exemption* from a human Law that establisheth Tyths, can be no sufficient *Exemption* to the Conscience, as to that Obligation which ariseth from a Divine Law. To speak more plainly; tho' the Magistrate's Favour protects from paying Tyths, yet it can't protect the Conscience from being obliged to contribute to the Maintenance of the Ministry and Service these Men partake of, so as to free the Conscience from Sin; the Obligation upon Conscience seeming to arise from an higher spring than the Magistrate's Power can reach, either in the making Laws, or dispensing with them when made. And all that I pretend to offer in this Case, is only a mo-

dest and impartial Appeal to the Conscience of those that are any way concern'd in it: Whether the Magistrate's *exempting* them from *paying Tyths*, can sufficiently *exempt* their *Conscience from contributing toward the Service and Ministry they partake of*, to those, who ought in reason to be supported in some Measure answerable to the Weight and Dignity of their Calling.

Which Consideration was, I suppose, the Ground of her Majesty's late Royal and Generous Bounty to the poor Clergy: From which I shall take Occasion to make an humble Apology for the Seasonableness of this Discourse. Her Majesty was pleas'd in the Year 1702, or about that time, out of a sincere and well-grounded Zeal for Religion, to bestow her Tenths and First-fruits toward a better Provision for the poor Clergy: And the Souls that such poor Clergy-men have the Charge of, are of as much Value, as the Souls of those that are under the Care of the most wealthy Pastors. But how far, and in what Respects the Poverty of the one doth *disable him*, and the Wealth of the other better *enable him* in the Discharge of the Function, with regard to the Success of each in their respective places, I shall leave to the Consideration of others.

However, this Royal Bounty, as it came to her Majesty's Hands clog'd and crippled by the many former Grants and Pensions of her Royal Predecessors; so was it fain to pass out from thence, attended with the same Incumbrances; so that it hath not been yet, nor 'tis to be fear'd (without some additional Contributions) is like to be able any way to answer the laudable Ends for which it was given. And if these Gentlemen of plentiful Estates (to whom the *Gospel Ministry* is, as the Apostle speaks, *ἀδωδότης*, that is, of *Free-cost*) should not be applied to for their Assistance, I know not who should. I therefore appeal to their Consciences with that Modesty and Humility that becomes a Christian, and no farther than an awful Regard to Truth will bear me out; *Whether they who labour in the Word and Doctrine for the Benefit of THEE & Souls, as well as of other Men's, have not as much Reason (not to say Right) to be help'd and supported by them, as well as by others, whose Estates are charged with the Payment of Tyths.*

I would humbly ask these Gentlemen, if they should have a Mind to herd themselves among the Dissenters, whether they would expect even Admission, much less a kind Reception there, unless they came open-handed with their liberal Contributions.

I would not be understood to intimate by this, as if I thought that these Tyth-free Gentlemen do joyn in Communion with the Church of *England*, meerly because they know they can be *there only* most secure and welcome to offer their Sacrifices of Prayer and Praise to God, *of that which doth cost them nothing* : For I doubt not, but they are Men of a true and hearty Zeal for Religion and Vertue, and therefore the fitter to be reason'd with, and apply'd to, in this Case ; and the more likely to be convinc'd of the Error, which I humbly conceive it may be made appear, that they labour under.

Wherefore, instead of reproachfully urging against them, that they cry up the Church of *England* with so much Zeal and Affection, only because they can feed their Souls so plentifully at other Men's Cost, who pay Tyths ; I will beg leave to desire them to consider, whether it would not be a laudable Instance of religious Generosity in them, and such as might become their common Christianity, if they would say and do as *David* did to *Araunah* in another Case ; *will not sacrifice to the Lord my God, of that which doth cost me nothing* \*. Or, why should I, having a plentiful Estate, desire to reap the same Benefit to my Soul *free-cost*, which other Men do, not without a considerable yearly Expence ? Specially, since 'tis a Benefit arising out of the daily Labours of those, whose time is wholly imploy'd in the Service, and whose Families are to be supported by their Ministry and Labours in that Calling. I can't at present apprehend, that it would be any way improper or absurd, if these Men should argue thus with themselves, and conclude to be as just and reasonable in common Equity, and according to the known Maxim of, *Doing as one would be done to*, to pay or reward those who labour for the Improvement of their Souls, as it is thole that labour for them in their secular Calling or Employment. B. 2. And

And this, I hope, may be a sufficient Apology for what I am now offering; and shew, that it is written with no other Design, but to procure some timely Assistance and Encouragement, to give Life to Her Majesty's Royal Bounty, which at present seems to lie disabled, and every way incapable of dispersing its wholesome and sovereign Influences in the way for which it was intended.

And now I will proceed to shew, that the Owners of such plentiful *Tyth-free Estates*, are, notwithstanding their Exemption by the Law of the Land, obliged in *Conscience*, by a Law still in Force, and superiour to all Human Laws, to contribute to the Support of the Gospel Ministry they partake of.

But there is one Objection, which, before I go any farther, it may be necessary to remove. These Gentlemen may say, that the Law of the Land gives them a just and rightful Title to their Estates, and to the Tyth of them too; how then can they be obliged in Conscience by any other Law, to part with any of that, which they hold by so indisputable a Title in those Laws, which are the Foundation of every Man's Right in his Estate? Now in answer to this, I beg leave to consider my self as speaking to Christians, and answering an Objection made by such. I say, to Christians; that is, to Persons incorporated together in one Body or Society under Christ's Head: And therefore, I do not think I have any need to seek for an Answer to this Objection in Common Law, but in Common Christianity.

And here, first I desire to ask, How came the Primitive Christians, as soon as they were converted, to contribute so liberally to the Support of the *Gospel Ministry* and Service? Whether they held their Estates before their Conversion, at the Will of the Prince, or by what other Title, I have no need to examine. It is easie enough to shew, I suppose, that their Title afterwards was very Precarious and little worth: For 'tis well known, that Plundering and Confiscation of Goods, &c. were the common Effects of Heathen Rage and Fury against Christians whose Estates could not be supposed to be very secure when their Lives lay so open to their Enemies, as to these S

made the daily Sacrifices to their Malice and Cruelty. And yet these Primitive Christians, notwithstanding their Lives and Fortunes were daily in the utmost Peril, look't upon themselves as *obliged* to contribute liberally according to their Abilities, to the *Gospel Ministry*. But by what Law could they think themselves so obliged, unless by an inward Principle and *Law of Conscience*, grounded upon the apparent natural Equity and Reasonableness of the Thing?

But then, it may be replied to this, that there was no such thing as Tyths amongst Christians in those Primitive Times: The Church and Ministry had nothing else to subsist on then, but these voluntary Pious Contributions of their new Converts; (which yet, by the way I presume, were never the less Just and Reasonable, because they were Voluntary and Pious:) But now, here are Tyths Established by the Law of the Land, and a Maintenance arising from thence, sufficient to support a Gospel Ministry and Service. This is all to be granted, and yet the Objection answered, because the same Power that established Tythes here in *England*, hath alienated a great part of them, and so hindered them from answering the Ends and Uses, to which they were first dedicated and given; by which means these Gentlemen's Estates became Tyth-free. And tho' I have nothing to do to pass Censure upon Princes for their many Indulgences, Grants and Exemptions in this Case; yet I humbly hope, nor any Man may be permitted to look into, and Lament, nor Argue against the Consequences thereof (so apparently contrary to the Interest of Religion and the Church) which arise from that Quarter: One of which Consequences, is, that in many Parishes, the Minister's Maintenance every way unsufficient; not above five, or six, or eight pounds *per Annum*, and in some Places Churches stand in a manner quite neglected, without a Minister to own them. And if it be not only a bare Convenience, but very much the Benefit and Edification of Men's Souls, in the knowledge and Practice of Religion and Vertue, to have Weekly Returns of God's Worship and Service, it must be allowed to be a great Detriment to them, to be without these Spiritual and Divine Helps. And if this were not

not the present Case, Her Majesty would have had no need to have given Her *First-Fruits* and *Tithes* to the Poor Clergy, nor any Body to have pleaded for additional *Contributions*, to make Her Royal Bounty Effectual : Neither indeed, should we have had any poor Clergy, but such as would have made themselves so by an imprudent Management, or by their own Extravagancy.

So that whatever *Tithes* there are Established by Law, yet these *Tith-free Gentlemen* seem to stand upon the same Ground, as if there was no such Establishment ; and therefore the present Application to them in this way, seems to be as reasonable, as it would have been, had they lived in those Primitive Times, when no Maintenance for a *Gospel-Ministry* was established by Law. And as to partaking of the *Gospel Service*, they are upon the same Level with the Primitive Christians : And the Laws, that in Conscience induc'd them, are in force still, and ought in reason to induce these to the like Contributions out of their *Tith-free Estates*. Or else we must say, that those *Gospel Rules*, viz. \* *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate to him that teacheth in all good things.* † And if we have sown unto you *Spiritual things*, is it a great thing that we should reap your *carnal things* ? And the *Workman is worthy of his Meat*, or the *Labourer of his reward* ; must be no Rule now to Christians, and were to be in force with relation to Conscience, no longer than till some human Powers should think fit to establish *Tiths* by Law, tho' the same Powers should unhappily take a good part of them away again, and thereby render a *Gospel Ministry*, in too many Parishes, every way destitute of a decent, nay, a bare necessary Support.

So that if the Law of the Land doth exempt these Gentlemen from *Tiths*, it must then likewise acquit their Conscience, from all Obligation that arises from that immutable Law of *Common Equity*, which deemeth the *Labourer worthy of his Reward*, and justifie them in partaking of the Benefits arising from the Labour and Pains of the *Gospel Ministry*, without contributing ought thereunto, out of the

\* Gal. 6. 6.

† 1 Cor. 9. 11.

their plentiful Estates; that is, in feeding their Souls *Cost-free*, upon the daily Service of the Minister, and the Pockets of the rest of the Congregation who pay Tyths.

But Suppose, as I have already observed, that there was no Law of the Land obliged People to maintain their Poor; would not every good Christian, notwithstanding, think himself oblig'd in Conscience, to relieve the Poor according to his Ability? And doth not every such Christian, notwithstanding his being liable to the common Poor Rates, give Alms? But by what Law doth he think himself obliged to this, but by the Law of God, directing and awing his Conscience? And the Gospel seems to be as express in requiring Christians to *contribute* to the *Service* and *Ministry* of the Word they partake of, to relieve the Poor. And what a near Relation these Gospel Rules of Piety toward God, and Bounty to the Poor, have to each other, sufficiently appears from our Church's mixing them together in the *Office* for the Holy Communion.

Again; in many Corporation Towns, where Ministers are maintain'd by Subscriptions, that are precarious in point of Law, and may be withdrawn at pleasure; I would ask, by what these Subscribers act, if not by a Law of Conscience grounded upon the common *Equity* and *Reasonableness* of making the *Labourer* a just and equitable Re-  
compense for the Benefits they reap from his *Labour* and *Service*? From which *Law* of *Conscience*, I can't see how the Gentlemen can be discharg'd by Vertue of an human Exemption from *Tyths*; because, notwithstanding such *Exemptions*, there is a *Divine Law*, which gives the *Labourer* an *inalienable Right* to, and Propriety in a suitable Recom-  
pense from him, who reaps the Benefit of his Labours.

Having removed this Objection, I shall proceed to examine what that *Law* is, which seems to oblige these Gentlemen to contribute to the *Support* of the *Ministry* and *Service* they partake of, notwithstanding their Exemption from *Tyths*. Bishop *Stillingfleet* in his \* *Irenicum*, treating of Church Government, tells us, ' That there are two  
' general

‘ general Things in it, founded upon the Law of Nature.  
 ‘ 1. That there must be a Society of Men for the Worship  
 ‘ of God (a). That this Society be governed, preserved  
 ‘ and maintained in a most convenient manner: Which he  
 endeavours to prove in that Chapter, from Man’s Social  
 Nature, to which I refer the Reader. Then he farther  
 enquires what particular Orders in the Church come  
 from the Law of Nature (b). Where he asserts, and lays  
 down six Things. I shall Name those of them only, which  
 suit with my present Occasion. 1. He saith, there is re-  
 quisite a *Distinction of Persons*, and a Superiority of Power  
 and Order of some over the others. By a distinction of  
 Persons he may, I conceive, be understood to mean the  
 Priesthood, or Ministry, as Distinct from the People, as  
 appears by his following Discourse about Pastors. ‘ And  
 by telling us, *That the Law of Nature, as Binding, (c)*  
*only determines of things necessary*, he plainly seems to  
 intimate, that the Gospel Ministry or Priesthood in the  
 Christian Society is a Dictate of the Law of Nature, as of  
 a thing Essentially necessary to such a Society.

The 2d particular Order in the Church, which he men-  
 tions as founded in the Law of Nature, is, ‘ That the Per-  
 ‘ sons employed in the Service of God should have Respec-  
 ‘ or Honour answerable to their Employment; which  
 ‘ appears from their Relation to God, as his Servants  
 ‘ and from the Persons Employed in this Work, before  
 ‘ positive Laws did restrain it (d). This appears, he  
 ‘ tells us, to have Foundation in the Law of Nature,  
 ‘ being easily deducible from one of the first Principles  
 ‘ the Law of Nature, viz. (e) That God is to be Wor-  
 ‘ shipped. If so, then those whose chief Employment  
 ‘ to attend upon him, ought to have a greater Reverence  
 ‘ than others: By the same Reason in Nature, that if  
 ‘ do Honour the King himself, the nearer any are to  
 ‘ King’s Person in Attendance, and Employment,  
 ‘ greater Honour is to be shewn them. The ground  
 ‘ which is, that the Honour given to Servants as such

(a) Part I. Chap. 3. p. 72.  
 (d) pag. 89

(b) Chap. 4. p. 83. (c) Pag.

(e) pag. 83.

not given to their Persons but to their Relation ; or to the one, only upon the Account of the other ; and so it doth not fix and terminate upon themselves, but rebounds back, and reflects upon the Original and Fountain of that Honour ; viz. the Prince himself.

Now if Honour and Respect to Ministers of Religion be a Dictate of Natural Religion, then so must a suitable Maintenance to Support them : Because Honour without so necessary a Support, would soon sink and dwindle away into nothing. And therefore it may not be improper to suppose, that such a *Maintenance* is implied in this Honour, as a necessary Part or Branch of it.

The *fifth* thing this Learned Author mentions as dictated by the Law of Nature in this Christian Society, is, That all who are admitted into this Society, must consent to be govern'd by the Laws and Rules of it, according to its Constitution. For none can be look'd upon as a Member of a Society, but such an one as submits to the Laws and Rules of the Society, as constituted at the time of his Entrance into it<sup>a</sup>. And I hope it will not be denied, that, those Precepts of the Apostle, *Let him that is taught in the Word communicate, and if we have sown unto you Spiritual things, we ought to reap your Carnal Things,* are Laws of the Christian Society still in force. I have no occasion to mention the other Particulars he Names, as Dictates of the Law of Nature. But in all of them, he tells us, That he considers the Church only as a Society or Corporation in general, without any regard to the particular Forms of Government, Discipline or Order it may fall under, in the several parts of it, at the Discretion of its proper Governours.

I should now proceed to examine the several Texts of scripture, in which my present Argument is concern'd, and whether it doth not plainly appear, that in those Texts, our Saviour and his Apostles are arguing upon the Principles of *Natural Religion* ; and shewing what the Dictates of Nature are, about the things I am handling. But before I do this, it may not be foreign to my present Design, to observe in general, that the main Intent of the Gospel Revelation,

C

is,

<sup>a</sup> Chap. 7. p. 132.<sup>b</sup> p. 133.

is, to recover Natural Religion to its primitive Beauty and Perfection, to restore it to its Original Light and Purity, by raising it out of the Rubbish of Heathen and Jewish Ignorance and Blindness, in which it lay hid and buried; and, indeed, to rescue it from those Corruptions it hath fallen under, ever since the Revolt of our first Parents. This might be one Meaning of our Saviour, where he tells us, *He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it* (a): That is, to perfect or fill it up, by adding or restoring to it, what the Corruption and Ignorance of former times had robb'd it of; improving it, and setting it in its true Light. And the like St. Paul might mean, where he tells us, That the Intent of his preaching up Faith, was, not to *make void, but to establish the Law* (b): That is, the Law of natural Religion and moral Vertue; not to weaken, but confirm its perpetual and indispensable Obligation. And what else could the Psalmist be supposed to mean, where he tells us, That *God's Righteousness is an everlasting Righteousness, and his Law the Truth*; but an Intimation, that the Law of Nature is immutable, and of eternal Obligation; the infinite Reason of God himself, being its supreme Standard and invariable Rule?

And this may perhaps be no improper Notion of natural Religion; not only that it is a Religion, whose Principles are every way agreeable to the rational Powers and Faculties of our human Nature, considered in its primitive State before the Fall; or a Religion establishing the natural Equity and Reasonableness of things, and explaining them in a way agreeable to our Capacities, or (according as Bishop Wilkins (d) describes it to be) that which Men might know, and should be obliged unto, by the meer Principles of Reason, improved by Consideration and Experience without the Help of Revelation; but also, that it is a Religion deriving its Birth and Beauty from the infinite Perfection of the Divine Nature; and having its Laws, as it were, darted from thence, as the Sun-Beams are from the Sun.

(a) Matth. 5. 17. (b) Rom. 3. 31. (c) Psalm. 119. 140.  
(d) Wilkin's Nat. Relig., Book 1. ch. 4 p. 39.

T  
ture  
no  
up  
Th  
tion  
and  
Obl  
to t  
the  
the  
"T  
gatio  
and  
trary  
poses  
Men:  
it self  
these  
bare R  
comm  
nal La  
as he a  
by just  
Law of  
very N  
appears  
in the V  
there a  
from the  
be remo  
e no A  
merel  
cases th  
Obligati  
ponsible  
ivil Cou  
e to b

Thus that learned Author (*a*) describes the Law of Nature, telling us, ' It binds indispensably, as it depends, not upon any arbitrary Constitutions, but is founded upon the intrinsical Nature of Good and Evil, in the Things themselves, antecedent to any positive Declarations of God's Will. So that, 'till the Nature of Good and Evil be changed, that Law is unalterable as to its Obligation : And the formal Reason of Man's Obedience to the Precepts of this Law of Nature, he asserts to be the Conformity, which the Things commanded have to the Divine Nature and Goodness.

'Tis true, he saith, the efficient Cause of Man's Obligation to these Things, is to be fetch'd from the Will and Command of God ; not, as it is taken for an arbitrary positive Will, but as it is executive of Divine Purposes, and as it engraves such a Law upon the Hearts of Men : For, notwithstanding Man's Reason consider'd in it self, be the chiefest Instrument of discovering what are these necessary Duties of Human Nature ; yet it is not bare Reason that binds Men to the doing those Things commanded in that Law, but as it is expressive of an eternal Law, and deduceth its Obligation from thence. And, as he adds further, it appears from hence, that whatever by just Consequence, can be deduced from the preceptive Law of Nature, is of Divine Right ; because, from the very Nature of that Law (it being indispensable) it appears, that God had an Intent to oblige all Persons in the World by it (*b*). And he farther Asserts, that there ariseth a necessary Obligation upon Conscience from the Dictates of the Law of Nature, which cannot be removed by any positive Law. For though there be no Action in the Civil Law against the Breach of merely Natural Law, as he instances in particular Cases there ; yet this proves not that these have no Obligation upon a Man, but only that he is not responsible for the Breach of Moral Honesty in them before Civil Courts. In which Sense, he saith, those Lawyers are to be understood, who deny the obligation of the

\* Law of Nature. But however, Conscience binds the  
 \* Offender over to Answer at an higher Tribunal, before  
 \* which all such Offences shall be punished. Thus then we  
 \* see no positive human Law can dispense with, or dissolve  
 \* the Obligation of the Law of Nature.

\* Much less, secondly, saith he, (p 30, 31.) can we suppose  
 \* any positive Divine Law should. For tho' God be Omnipotent,  
 \* yet therefore it follows not that he can dissolve the  
 \* Obligation of the preceptive Law of Nature, or change  
 \* the Natures of Good and Evil. God may indeed alter the  
 \* Properties of those Things, from whence the Respects of  
 \* Good and Evil do result; as in *Abraham's* Offering *Isaac*,  
 \* the *Israelites* taking away the *Egyptians* Jewels, which  
 \* God may justly do by Vertue of his absolute Dominion:  
 \* But the Change here, is not in the Obligation of the Law,  
 \* but in the Things themselves. Murder would be an intrinsic  
 \* Evil still; but what might have been done by immediate  
 \* and explicit Command from God, would have been  
 \* no Murder. Theft had been a Sin still, but taking things  
 \* alienated from their Properties by God himself, was not  
 \* Theft. We conclude then, what comes immediately  
 \* from the Law of Nature by way of Command, binds immediately  
 \* mutably and indispensably. Thus I have transcribed  
 \* such Reasonings of this Learned Author, as seem to be  
 \* use in the present Case, and to support the Argument  
 \* am upon: Which is, that notwithstanding Men may be  
 \* exempted by human Law, or the Indulgence of the Magistrate  
 \* from paying Tyths toward the Support of the Gospel Service  
 \* they partake of; yet they are obliged in Conscience  
 \* to contribute thereunto by a Superior (a perpetually  
 \* and indispensably Binding) Law, from which no positive  
 \* human Law or Indulgence can exempt them.

And for a fuller Confirmation of this, it seems to me  
 \* be sufficient, that the great Law of *doing as one would  
 \* done unto*, and that Law of common Justice and Equity  
 \* *Workman is worthy of his Meat*, are the *indispensable* and  
 \* *perpetually binding* Laws of Nature; and that they are  
 \* seems to have been sufficiently made out by those Definitions  
 \* this Author hath given of Natural Religion, or  
 \* preceptive Laws of Nature. But by common Justice

Equi

(a) Iren.

180, 181

Equity, I do not mean that which shall be declared to be such by any human Law in particular States, or by the mutable Sanctions of human Authority, but whatever was and will be such ; as arising out of the intrinsical Nature and Reasonableness of Things, and cannot but continue such, so long as Truth, and Equity, and Justice, shall continue such : That is, it is such Justice and Equity as derives its Obligation from some unalterable Law of Christ, or from such indispensable Reasons, as will equally hold in all Places, Times and Persons.

Now supposing a Society for Religious Worship, founded upon the indispensable Law of Nature, the Essentials of it must be supposed to stand upon the same Foundation. And if Government and Order be the Essentials of a Society, as I hope they will be allowed to be, they must appear to be founded upon such an unalterable Law of Nature; because, in a Society, Government and Order are equally necessary with relation to all Places, Times and Persons, for the Substance of that Society, so far as concerns the very Nature and Essence of it (a): That is, tho' what particular Rules and Forms of Government and Order shall be in force for the well ordering that Society, may depend upon such Laws of the Society as are mutable, and may be changed as lawful Authority shall see fit, with relation to the various Circumstances of Times, Places and Persons ; yet, that there should be some Government and Order, seems to be always absolutely necessary, as founded upon the indispensable Law of Nature, for the Preservation and Support of the Society. So, that there be the Exercise of God's Publick Worship, and a distinct Order of Men appointed thereunto, and a suitable Maintenance provided for this distinct Order of Men ; this seems to be all equally necessary from the same indispensable Reason, as to all Times, Places and Persons.

And the Account, which another very Learned Author gives of this Matter, seems to be very agreeable to this, who tells us, (b) ' That it hath been the general Practice of all Nations, to have amongst them a distinct Calling of  
' Men,

---

(a) *Iren.* Book II. Ch. 6. p. 344. (b) *Bp. Wilk. Nat. Relig.* 180, 181.

' Men, set apart to Officiate *in Sacris*, to assist the People  
 ' in their Publick Worship, to instruct them in their Du-  
 ' ties, and to excite them to the Performance of them;  
 ' which being a Work of so Publick Usefulness and general  
 ' Necessity, common Reason will assure us that the best  
 ' way of providing for it, is by such Persons as are bred  
 ' up to it, and set apart for it. Such Men are like to have  
 ' the greatest Skill, who have made it their Business and  
 ' greatest Care, and who are obliged to it by way of  
 ' Office.

Now, their being thus obliged and set apart to it, ne-  
 cessarily implies their being taken off from all other Im-  
 ployments, and concerned so to spend their Time and  
 Thoughts about it, as that they can have no tolerable Con-  
 venience of getting a Subsistence for themselves and Fami-  
 lies in any other Way: And consequently, that they ought  
 in *common Reason and Equity* to be decently supported and  
 maintained by those, for whom they labour and thus im-  
 ploy their whole time. And perhaps it may be hard to  
 find any Societies for Religious Worship, not only in the  
 Christian but Heathen Parts of the World, where they have  
 not their Priests and Sacrifices; or a distinct Order of Per-  
 sons for executing the Sacred Rites and Solemnities of  
 Worship, and which have not a suitable Maintenance and  
 Support, as being sequester'd from all other Employments  
 whereby to maintain themselves. And tho' by what Way  
 their Maintenance shall be provided, may be determined by  
 the Authority of the proper Governours in the Society;  
 yet that there be such a fit Maintenance, seems to be ground-  
 ed upon the indispensable Law of common Equity, upon  
 which all Societies for Religious Worship seem to act in  
 their settling the several Ways of Maintenance for the  
 Support of a Publick Ministry. And my Author, speaking  
 farther of the Honourableness of the Ministerial Function,  
 tells us (a), That we have a farther Evidence of this, by the  
 Light of Nature, from the Persons employed in this Work  
 before any positive Laws did restrain it, as I have already  
 observ'd; ' Which appears from hence, saith he, in the  
 ' in the eldest of Times, those who had the greatest  
 Authority

Authority Civil, had likewise the Sacred conjoined with it. Thence we read of *Noah's* sacrificing, and of *Jacob's* and *Job's* sacrificing, and so of others. And to prove yet farther, that Church Government is founded upon the Law of Nature, he shews (a), ' That such Societies for Worship were among Heathens, which he evidenceth by three Things. 1. The Solemnity of their Sacrifices. 2. Their Publick Festivals. 3. Their Sacred Mysteries, as may be seen in that Chapter (b), where he shews how far, and in what Sense, he asserts Sacrificing to be from the Light of Nature; which supposeth a Priesthood peculiar to the Sacrificing part of the Worship, &c.

But to proceed to a farther Consideration of the Maintenance of a Gospel Ministry and Service, I shall hasten to examine the several Places of Scripture, in the New Testament especially, that relate to my present Argument, and see whether our Saviour and his Apostles do not therein plainly appear to Argue upon the Principles of Common Justice and Equity, founded upon the Indispensable Laws of Natural Religion.

I begin then first, with our Saviour's sending forth the Twelve to Preach. And tho' their Commission given them there, be not so full as that he gave them after his Resurrection; yet here, *Mat. 10. 9, 10, &c.* he gives them several Directions in the Execution of it; One of which is, that they should provide neither Gold, nor Silver, nor Brass, nor Purses, nor Scrip for their Journey, nor two Coats, nor Shoes, nor Staves. Which Direction Christ grounds upon a Maxim, viz. That the Workman is worthy of his Meat. And so in *Luke 10. 1, 7.* when the Seventy are sent forth to Preach, they have much the same Instructions given them, grounded, as to their Maintenance, upon the like Maxim, For the Labourer is worthy of his Hire. For tho' neither the Twelve nor the Seventy could be suppos'd to have been hired to Preach the Gospel by the Jews or Gentiles, who were such bitter Enemies to the Gospel, and the Teachers thereof; yet Christ tells them, that wherever they should find the Sons of Peace; that is, I suppose, Persons

sons of a meek, humble, and teachable Temper, there *their Peace should rest*; that is, their Doctrine and Preaching should be heark'ned and submitted to, and their Persons respected. Which Respect Christ plainly intimates, should be express'd toward them, partly by *ministering to their Wants*, and decently *supporting and maintaining them*. The Reasonableness of which, Christ supposeth these new Converts would be sufficiently convinc'd of, from that general Maxim of common Justice and Equity he had mentioned: And therefore directs them to make no Provision before-hand, for their Livelyhood or Support, &c.

And that this Maxim, viz. *The Workman is worthy of his Meat*, or, *the Labourer of his Hire*, is an unalterable Principle or Law of natural Religion, appears abundantly from the Obligation arising from it; which is equally necessary and binding, with relation to all different Times, Places and Persons; it being a Maxim, I say, founded upon the unalterable Law of impartial Reason: And, I suppose, will be ever true, so long as Truth is Truth, and Equity Equity; that *the Workman is worthy of his Meat*; that is, hath an undoubted Right and Title, founded upon the reverfable Law of Nature or natural Equity, to a suitable *Recompence or Reward* from him, for whom he works, who partakes of the Benefits of his Labour and Service the Way of his Vocation and Ministry.

If it be the Pleasure of some, to call this the Bounty Charity of People, in thus liberally contributing toward the *Maintenance* of the Minister, of whose Service and Labours they partake, I shall not be much offended at it; I am sure, let them call it what they will, it is what is done upon a very just and reasonable Consideration, and with no Difference of Times, Places, Circumstances or Tempers of People, can make ever the less necessary, just and equitable, or take off the Obligation it brings all Men under.

The next place of Scripture to be consider'd in our present Case is, the Apostle's Discourse in 1 Cor. 9. Where from the 7th to the 15th Verse, he not only proves the Lawfulness of Ministers receiving a *Maintenance* from People, who partake of their *Service and Ministry*, but Peoples Duty of giving or paying it, as my Author ob-

St. Paul plainly says there, (a) That all the rest of the Apostles, excepting *Barnabas* and himself, did forbear working for their Maintenance, and consequently must be supposed to have had all their Necessities supplied by the Churches they Ministred to, in Spiritual Things; and sufficiently asserts his own and *Barnabas's* Right to such Supplies and Supports as they had, and their Power and Liberty to forbear working, as they did. Nay, doth not St. Paul himself say to these *Corinthians*, that he robbed other Churches, taking Wages of them, to do them Services? What! Paul turn'd Hireling, and in the plainest Terms, taking Wages of Churches? Yet so it is; and his forbearing it at *Corinth*, was apt to be interpreted as an Argument that he did not love them: 2 Cor. 11. 11. So far were they from looking upon Paul as an Hireling in doing it. Paul is strong and earnest in asserting his Right; he might have done it at *Corinth*, as well as elsewhere: But from some prudent Considerations of his own, mentioned, 2 Cor. 11. 12. He forbore the Exercise of his Right among them, altho' at the same time he received Maintenance from other Places.

And farther; How plain is it to any one that considers things, that St. Paul, in asserting the Minister's Right Maintenance from the People that partake of their Service and Ministry, argues upon the Principles of natural Justice and Equity, and the unvariable Reasonableness of Things in themselves, in those Words: Viz. *Who goeth Warfare at any time at his own Charges? Who planteth a Field and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or feedeth a Flock and eateth not of the Milk of the Flock?* Ver. 7. What he says is not his self, but arguing upon the self-evident and indisputable Equity and Reasonableness of Things, and upon that indispensable Law of Nature, of rendering to all their Dues; *Whatsoever you would that Men should do unto you, even so do unto them?* Which are the Principles of natural Religion and Justice, that will equally bind every where to the Worlds End.

D

And

And then again ; When he brings that Place out of *Deut. 25. 4. Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn.* What ! saith he, doth God take care for Oxen, *Verf. 9, 10. or saith he it for our sakes ?* And then makes himself Answer , for our sakes, and for the asserting our natural Right to a Maintenance from those for whom we labour and minister, *no doubt this was written.* As much as to say, it is not the Business of Religion, or the Intent of God's revealing his Mind to Mankind, to take care about the Life and Welfare of Oxen ; but to instruct us in the right Use and Application of our Reason, in the conscientious Discharge of our Duty to him. So that the Design of God's Appointment there, *viz. Thou shalt not muzzle,* &c. and of the Apostles citing it here, as pertinent to his Discourse, seems to be to shew, that as it would be not only the most ridiculous Folly, but every way contrary to the common Light of natural Reason, for a Man to expect that his Beast should be able to afford him the Benefit of his Labour and Strength in his Service, without his daily Food or Provender, so it is every way as unreasonable for Men to expect to reap the Benefit of the Minister's Labour and Service in his Function, without contributing to his Support and Maintenance.

And again, Verse 11. *If we have sown unto you Spiritual Things, is it a great thing.* That is, is there any Unreasonableness in it, or doth it not appear to be the most equitable Thing imaginable, even the plainest Dictate of the Law of Nature, That we should reap your carnal Things ? And Verse 13, 14. *Do you not know, that they who Minister about holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple ? And they who wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar ? Even hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.* Which, tho' it may not be sufficient to prove the Divine Right of Tythes, yet it is every way sufficient to prove the unalienable Divine Right of a competent Maintenance to be provided for the Gospel Minister and Service, by those who partake of the Benefits thereof and consequently shews the Unreasonableness (not to say Injustice) of those, who, notwithstanding their great Wealth and plentiful Estates, can content themselves

reap the Benefit of the *Gospel Ministry*, not only *Tyth-free*, but *Contribution-free*? For the Apostles Argument here seems plainly to run thus; That as, under the Law, a competent Provision was made in the way of Tythes for the Maintenance of the Ministry or Priesthood; the ground of which Provision by positive Divine Appointment, was the natural Equity and Reasonableness of the thing, viz. *That the Workman is worthy of his Meat*: So there is the same Reason and Ground in force still, under the Gospel, That they who labour in the Word and Doctrine, should be maintained by those, for whose Souls they labour. But I would be permitted to ask, How can these Gentlemen, of such Wealth and Estates, satisfy themselves, that they discharge their Consciences, as to the natural Equity and Reasonableness of the Thing, (the Topick upon which my Argument is founded) who, together with their numerous families, partake of the Benefits of the Service, without contributing toward the Maintenance of those, who labour therein.

Another Place of Scripture that I shall consider in the present Case, is, *St. Paul's* preaching the Gospel freely, or free-cost, to the *Corinthians* (a); where he tells them, that he robbed other Churches, taking Wages of them to do his Service: And again, *When I was present with you and was chargeable to none*. 'Tis true, the Apostle forbear what he had a Right to, from these *Corinthians* as well as other Churches; but still he insists upon his Right, and assigns several Reasons and prudent Considerations, why he forbore it, as I have already observed; one of which was, (b) *to cut off Occasion from those that might take Occasion*. So that *St. Paul's* Forbearance here, is all that is mentioned with a *Salvo Jure*, to shew, That a Man's forbearing to make an actual Claim, ought in such Cases, to be no Detriment to the Equity and Justice of his Title: which, in the mean time, sufficiently answers the Objections of those who urge this Practice of *St. Paul* against the Payment of Tyths, or the Justice and Reasonableness of contributing toward the Maintenance of a Gospel Ministry.

D 2

(But

But still it will be objected, That the Law of the Land hath made sufficient Provision for Ministers in our Church. To which I answer, that this Discourse is not intended as an Appeal to the Government; but to the *Consciences* of those who have most Reason to contribute toward making up what the Law of the Land is deficient in; that is, the *Maintenance* of those *Ministers*, who have no tolerable Competency. And Her Majesty's Royal Bounty, &c. is for the same end, not to add where there is a sufficient Competency, but where there is not.

But before I dismiss this Place of Scripture, it may be requisite, for the clearing this Matter, to inquire how, or upon what Grounds, these Wages became due, or upon what *Title* or *Law* the Apostle claims or asserts them as his *Right*. For, in the *Roman Empire*, there was, to be sure at that time, no Law for Tyths or Contributions, or any thing else, toward the Maintenance of a *Gospel Ministry*, which taught a Religion so directly opposite to Heathen idolatry, and to all the Vices and Immoralities of Mankind for which the Apostles, instead of being paid or rewarded, were hated and cruelly Oppressed and Persecuted. But the *Wages* which St. Paul took as his Right, were from *Christian Converts*; and he grounded his Title and Claim upon the Principles of natural Equity and Justice, as the due Reward of his Labours among them. And before the Empire became Christian, or any Law could be supposed to be made for a settled Maintenance for the *Gospel Ministry*, it must be only out of an inward *Principle of Conscience*, and a devout Sense of the natural *Equity* of the thing, that such liberal Contributions were made by the Church for the Support of the *Ministry*, as well as the Poor; where every good Christian, I presume, would think himself at this time oblig'd to relieve according to his Ability. I have already observed, tho' there should be no Law of the Land compelling him thereunto. And therefore, tho' such good Christians may be exempted by any particular Grants or Indulgences of the *Magistrate*, I can't see how he can yet think himself exempted in *Conscience*, from contributing to the *Maintenance* of the *Ministry*, from whose Labours and Service he reaps so constant a Benefit, un-

he can believe that human Authority can supersede the Obligation and Force of a perpetual standing Law of Equity, grounded upon the natural Reasonableness of Things; or that any civil Exemptions in the State, can acquit his Conscience from Guilt in the Breach of a Divine Law, if the Law of Nature be such. I confess, he that shall calculate his Religion, and the conduct of his Conscience, from no higher Principles, than those of Mr. *Hobs*, may be able to content himself with such a State-Religion, and think to get to Heaven by his Statute-Book, better than his Bible.

I will mention but one place of Scripture more; and that is, *Gal. 6. 6.* where the Apostle exhorts them to be liberal to their Teachers in as plain and express Terms as can be used; *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate to him that teacheth in all good Things.* I will not suspect, that any Body can be so ignorant as to imagine, that the Apostle, from the manner of expressing himself here, is only giving Advice, which may be hearken'd to, or not, without Sin; because, in speaking against the most notorious Sins, he often expresses himself in the same Terms, as, *Let him that stole, steal no more*; and, *Let your Conversation be without Covetousness, &c.* But, if the following Words may be supposed to have any relation to these I have mentioned, or to be intended to heighten our Attention, or give any Weight to them, we have then a very plain Intimation here, that he that doth not observe this Rule of *Communicating* to his Teacher in all good things, doth not deceive himself and mock God; which are no small Instances of a Man's Folly and Guilt. And in how peculiar manner God may be look'd upon, as concern'd in this Case and Precept of the Apostle, *V. 6.* may be no difficult matter to gather or infer from that near Relation the Gospel Ministry bears to his most *Holy Name* and *Nature*. However, the Apostle can be supposed to be arguing in this Case upon no other Principle, but the self-evident and undisputable Equity and Reasonableness of the thing in its own intrinick Nature, without bidding them go back to the Law of Tyths, or stay to see what particular Methods human Authority should think fit to establish for the Maintenance of the Ministry; or without telling them they might

might look upon themselves exempted in Conscience, from any Obligation by Vertue of this Precept of communicating to their Teachers, &c. till the Law of the Land should oblige them to observe it, or do something in that way.

But that I may not be too tedious upon this Argument, I shall not stay so much as to examine what the Apostle writes to the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thes.* 5. 12, 13. tho' the high Esteem and Love for the Gospel Ministry seems to be there demanded as a thing due, upon a valuable or equitable Consideration, namely, *for their Works sake*. And 'tis no way absurd to suppose, that the Fruits of that Esteem and Love toward them, ought to be manifested by a *liberal Contribution* toward their *Support and Maintenance*: Because Honour, as I have already observed, without such a necessary Support, will soon sink and dwindle away into nothing. Neither will I enlarge at present upon 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double Honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine*; since the Apostle supports his Argument there in the following Verse, upon the very same Principle of common Justice and Equity, that I have already spoken to: Nor, lastly, will I make any farther strict Inquiry upon what Principles and Motives *Abraham* (a) gave Tyths so liberally to *Melchizedeck*; or *Jacob* so generously dedicated to God the Tenth of all that he should give him, *Gen.* 28. 22. or *Joseph* refused to alienate the Lands and Possessions of the Priests (b), being an utter Stranger, I presume, to the later Methods of *Appropriation* and *Impropriation*: Tho' it is easy to believe, that these renowned Patriarchs and Patterns of Piety and Vertue, acted in these Cases upon such inward Awes and Principles of Conscience and natural Religion, as are since unhappily worn out of the Minds of too many.

I will only mention one or two things more, whereby to shew the Reasonableness of what I have advanced, and conclude. One Consideration that I shall offer, shall be taken from the Nature of the Christian Church in general as it is a Society: And several others might be taken, I had a mind to enlarge, from the Nature and Ends of the Ministerial Function and Employment.

(a) *Heb.* 7. 2.(b) *Gen.* 47. 22.

And *First*; If we consider the Christian Church as a Society, I cannot see why every Member thereof, should not look upon himself to be obliged in his place, and according to his Ability, to bear a part in doing what is even essentially necessary to its Support, as a Society. And if the Gospel Ministry and Service be so essentially necessary in order thereunto, methinks every Member should think it but reasonable to *contribute* in a suitable Proportion, out of a plentiful Tyth-Free Estate, or any other Stock of Wealth no way charged with Tyths, toward the Maintenance and Support thereof. I say, in a suitable Proportion; because the Rule of Proportion seems to be of use in Religion, as well as in other Matters; as appears from the Apostle's charging Christians to *lay up in Store* for charitable and pious Uses, *according as God should bless or prosper them*, 1 Cor. 16. 2. I am not unwilling (as I have already intimated) that the Contributions I am pleading for, should be called Liberality or Bounty; only I would evince, that it is such Liberality as every Member in the Church is bound in Conscience to offer, according to his Ability, in the way I am mentioning. And as for Proportion, the Want or Deficiency of that, I humbly conceive, was the main thing our Saviour aimed to reprehend, by the Reflections he made upon the rich Men's casting into the Treasury so little, out of their great Abundance.

But to proceed: It is the Observation of a learned Prelate \* of our Church, that the Method that our Saviour hath set on Foot for our Salvation, doth not so much consider us as single Persons, as joyned together in one common Society. The Consequence of which is, that every Person, so far as he is a Christian, is so far a Member of the Church. ' From whence it will follow, he tells us, that every such Person is obliged to joyn in external Communion with the Church, where he can do so. Because, saith he, without this, the Ends of Church Society cannot be attained: One of which Ends, he tells us, is the more solemn Worship of God'. For the Performance of which solemn Worship, a publick Gospel Ministry seems to

to be every way necessary. And who can be more properly said to be obliged to contribute to the Maintenance of such a Ministry, than the several Members? Because they plainly seem to be obliged, even by Vertue of their Church-Membership, to be instrumental, according to their Ability, in carrying on or accomplishing this great End, viz. *God's Solemn Worship*; and also, because they share in the Benefits of such a publick Ministry and Service in the Edification of their own Souls. And therefore he tells us, p. 8. ' That they discourse wildly and extravagantly, who talk ' of Christianity at large, without relation to a Church, ' or Communion with any Society of Christians '. And if it be every Christian's Duty, as Member of the Church, to prosecute this end of the Church, into which he is incorporated, I mean, the solemn Worship of God and publick Profession of Religion; I cannot see why it should not be his Duty, according to his Ability, to prosecute and be instrumental in establishing the Means, that is, the *Maintaining a Gospel Ministry*, the Persons every necessary for the solemn Performance of this *Divine Worship*.

Many very material things might be urged in the present Case, from a Consideration of the Nature of the Ministerial Employment, to which every Man in that Function is obliged to dedicate his whole Time and Labours: But I will only add this, that this *competent Maintenance* for the Minister, which I am now pleading for, seems to be every way necessary to enable him, by a liberal Contribution, to encourage a small Charity-School in his Parish (pursuant to that laudable sort of Christian Benefaction, which, to the eternal Honour, hath flourished so much in our English Church of late Years); and to do such Good in other charitable Ways, as may procure him that Esteem which will render his Labours the more effectual.

And it might not be too foreign, I hope, from my present Argument, if I should say, that if a Minister's be put into such comfortable Circumstances, shall give him Life or Authority to his Reprehensions of Vice; yet it will give him some Courage and Boldness to rebuke, when a daring Sinner shall not be able to retort upon him the poverty of his Condition, nor give him a Wipe for Spunging

so much upon his Neighbours. When *St. Paul* bid *Timothy* rebuke with all Authority, he meant, I suppose, that he should have somewhat to support that Authority: And tho' the extraordinary Assistances of the Spirit, and the Dignity of the Function, were sufficient Supports in those Days of exemplary Zeal, Devotion and Piety; yet somewhat else may seem to be wanting now, since those extraordinary Assistances have been withdrawn. I say, the extraordinary Assistance and Protection of the Holy Ghost, which the Apostles had, were sufficient to support the Authority and Esteem of their Function, against the Reproaches of Poverty in those times; But now some competent Share of Human Learning, &c. seems to be every way necessary, which the beggarly Condition of a Clergy-man is too great a Bar against, and such a Difficulty, as is hardly to be got over in his Endeavours to attain it.

The Augmentations that have been made of late Years, several Bishops, Deans and Chapters, and other Persons of a good and pious Inclination this way, (as may be seen in *Dr. Kennet's Case*, or *History of Improvements*) are to me no improper Arguments of such Men's being sufficiently convinc'd of the great Need and Reasonableness of the thing I am pleading for; and, methinks, should be no small Motives to quicken others in a liberal Contribution toward accomplishing the same good Ends.

There are several Things relating to the present Case; which might be taken out of the late learned Bishop *Stillingfleet's* Discourses to his Clergy, at his Visitations; and other Authors; which will never be effectually answer'd, till the Thing is done that I am here insisting on. But I am sensible, that mine own Insufficiency will be a sufficient Apology for my not not having drawn this Discourse to its full Length, and for my not having done it in a more exact and perfect Method.

I will therefore beg leave only to ask this one Question; what we then have done; namely, Whether, if a National Christian Society were going about to establish a *Maintenance* for a *Gospel Ministry*, they would leave one part of it destitute of a suitable Competency, and consequently chain them down to a pinching and disconsolate

Poverty ? If it shall be answered in the Negative, as I presume it would be by all reasonable and impartial Men, then this seems to me to be a sufficient Argument of a very blameable Deficiency in the present Case.

## *The CONCLUSION.*

**I**T may be objected against this Discourse, by the Owners of these *Tyth-free Estates*, that they were purchased by them or their Ancestors, at a Value including the Tyths, and therefore for them to be made liable to the Payment of Tyths, would be charging them double.

To this I answer, *First*, That I meddle not with Tyths in the way of advising the Magistrate to make any new Laws about them ; this Discourse being only an Appeal to the Consciences of those that may be concern'd in it.

*Secondly*, I ask, Whether these Purchases were made from the Church ? Or, Whether the Gospel Ministers are ever the better, by, or from them ? Or reap any Benefit from thence, in the way of a Recompence for their Labour and Service from those, whose Souls they labour for.

*Thirdly*, I ask, Whether these Purchases were made from those, who had a rightful Power to sell ? And whether if they had a Power to sell the Tyths, they had also a Power to sell the Minister's equitable Right to a Recompence for his Labour and Service, without his Consent ? And consequently, whether it may not be urged in this Case of Conscience, as in some other Cases of Law, *Caveat Emptor*.

*Lastly*, I am not in this Discourse, arguing for the Estates, being charged with Tyths in the common way of the Law ; but only for the Reasonableness that sometimes

should be done in this Juncture, that may give Life to her Majesty's Royal Bounty, and enable it to produce its intended Sovereign Effects in places, where a sufficient Competency is wanting for the Minister's Subsistence, to enable him to discharge the Duties of his Function with any tolerable Cheerfulness and Success.

For this Discourse is intended as an humble Application, not only to the Owners of Tyth-free Estates, but also to others, whose Wealth may consist of vast Stocks of Money, or in the way of Trade; and who are every way able to make considerable Contributions in this Case; and who, perhaps, partake of the Gospel Ministry and Service at little or no Cost.

Last of all; If it shall be objected, that I have in this Discourse made use of an Author, whose Book fell under much censure for the Principles he hath advanced with relation to Episcopacy: I answer, that some good Reasonings may be found in a Book that shall chance to be blended with Errors and Mistakes: And, if what I have taken out of the *Irenicum*, be agreeable with Truth and Reason, we have no more need to make an Apology for making use of that Book, than the Church of *England* hath for taking several parts of her excellent Liturgy out of the Mass-book.

I might add here, many places of Scripture pertinent to the present Design: As, *Honour the Lord with thy Substance, with the First-Fruits of all thine Increase; so shall thy Barns be filled with Plenty, and thy Presses shall burst out with new Wine*, Prov. 3. 9, 10. But, because Brevity is what I at first intended, I shall conclude with these two Observations. The first taken out of the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man* he saith, 'It \* is but just and necessary that those, who by undertaking that Calling, that is, the Ministry, are taken off from the Ways of gaining a Livelihood in the World, should be provided for by them, whose Souls they

\* they watch over. And therefore it is most reasonable  
 \* which the Apostle urges in this Matter, *If we have sown*  
 \* *unto you spiritual Things, is it a great thing if we shall reap*  
 \* *your carnal things?* 1 Cor. 9. 11. That is, it is most un-  
 \* reasonable for Men to grudge the bestowing a few car-  
 \* nal things, the outward Necessaries of this temporal  
 \* Life, on them, from whom they receive spiritual things,  
 \* even Instruction and Assistance toward the obtaining of an  
 \* Eternal Life.

The other Observation I take out of a small Pamphlet  
 called, *The Husband-man's Manual*; a Book often given to  
 poor People, and never censured by any Body, as I have  
 heard. In the moral Application the Author makes about  
 Tyths, he hath this Expression, viz. 'I do in my Heart  
 \* so far approve of what our Ancestors have done, that  
 \* were it left to my self to set a-part what Portion I  
 \* self should think fit, for the Maintenance of God's Min-  
 \* isters; I would take care, that he, by whom I receive spi-  
 \* ritual Things, should want nothing of my Temporal.

**F I N I S.**